

8/15/99

**Colossians 4:2-18**

Paul now comes to a final exhortation for the believer regarding the believer's new life.

Since he is risen with Christ, is a new man, he has a new home, therefore he should have a new practice.

In fact the first five verses are commands to what Paul was praying for the Colossians. Col. 1:9-13

**4:2-6 The Christian imperatives.**

**4:2** The command to pray.

- 1) They were to continue earnest in prayer.
  - a) The idea is of persistence, in view of what he has just commanded to each member of the family to be.
  - b) The verb continue "proskarteio is used of a boat that always stands ready for someone. Mk. 3:9
  - c) The picture is of a total dependency on God and is commanded of the entire church as he has just finished mentioning the family.
  - d) The word for prayer" is always used towards God, never man. Acts 6:4

e) The tense speaks of a present practice on an ongoing basis, unceasing.

1Thess.5:17

- 2) They were to do it being vigilant in it.
    - a) The word vigilant "gregoreuo" means to give strict attention or caution, on guard and alert mentally.
      - \* Used of Christ's return. Mk. 13:33;  
1Thess. 5:6; Rev. 16:1
    - b) Being aware to God's will and leading.
    - c) Being aware of the enemy.
    - d) Being ready for the Lord's coming for his church. Lk. 21:34-36
  - 3) They were to do it with thanksgiving.
    - a) This is the seventh times "thanksgiving" is mentioned. Col. 1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 16, 17
    - b) The idea is that of appreciation and gratitude for what God has done and given to be what He alone can make of them.
      - \* In everything give thanks. . . .  
1Thess. 5:18a
- 4:3-4** The prayer request as intercessors.
- 1) That God would open a doors "thyra" for the word.
    - \* The focus is direction!
    - a) A door is used as a metaphor for open opportunities to share the word of God. 1Cor. 16:9; 2Cor. 2:12

- b) The prayer is for “us”, Paul and his companions in ministry.
  - c) He wrote to the Philippians that he was in prison by divine appointment, it was his next assignment. Phil. 1:12-18
- 2) That they might speak, have the fluency of speech clearly, regarding the mystery of Christ, hidden in the past but now made known, that Jew and Gentile are one in Christ. Eph. 3:2-6, 9; Col. 1:26, 2:2
- \* The focus is articulation!
  - a) For which he was also in chains for preaching the gospel.
  - b) The word for chains “dedemai” meaning to bind or fasten.
  - c) The reason for his chains had a purpose, to preach to the people God brought to him or placed before him.
  - d) A similar prayer is found in Ephesians. Eph. 6:18-19
  - e) Paul fits into the missionary minded type of individual, a Philadelphian believing God will open door as well as shutting them. Rev. 3:7
  - f) Paul told the Philippians that he was in the Roman jail for the furtherance of the gospel. Phil. 1:12-18

- g) Paul told Timothy that though he was bound, the word of God was not bound. 2Tim. 2:9
- 3) That Paul might make it manifest, as he ought to speak.
- \* The focus is illumination and empowerment!
  - a) The word manifest “phaneroo” means to make known, evident.
  - b) The idea being of presenting it clarity and it’s simplicity.
  - c) The manner is also address, “as he ought to speak”, implying his personal obligation in full confidence, not being intimidated or fearful.
    - 1)) I am not ashamed.... Rom. 1:16-17
    - 2)) I did not come with human wisdom.... 1Cor. 2
    - 3)) He did not teach philosophy. Col. 2:8
- 4:5** The command to walk in wisdom.
- 1) The process of wisdom is knowledge with right understanding, arriving at the best conclusion.
    - \* Literally, in wisdom walk, ordering one’s behavior.
    - a) The wisdom is divine not human.
    - b) The source is heaven not earth.
    - c) Available only in Christ. Col. 1:9, 28; 2:3; 3:16

- 2) Towards those who are outside.
- a) This identifies those who know not Christ, though they may be religious. 1Cor. 5:12, 31; 1Thess. 4:12; 1Tim. 3:7
  - b) This would include both Jew and Gentles, who were unbelievers.
  - c) Paul told the Philippians that some preached out of a wrong motive and others of a right one, either way Christ was being preached and in this he rejoiced! Phil. 1:15-18
- 2) The purpose was for redeeming the time.
- a) The word redeeming “exagorazo” means to buy out from the market or town square.
    - \* It is often used for the buying of a slave and sinner. 1Cor. 6:20; Gal. 4:5
  - b) The particular that Paul wants the believers at Colossee to buy up, is time, make the most of every opportunity to preach Christ.
    - 1)) The word for time “karios” means season, set time, a window time, for the time is short. 1Cor. 7:29
    - 2)) Time is opportunity when it come to the gospel, because once you let time pass, you never get it back.

- 3)) Time is the most valuable thing we possess for the kingdom of God..
- \* Ephesians says, because the days are evil. Eph. 5:16

**4:6** The command is to speak with kingdom quality.

- 1) Let your speech always be with grace.
  - a) Grace “karis” refers to beauty, charm and unmeritted favor.
  - b) Our word should be full of the grace of God for the non believer to be attracted to the salvation of God.
  - c) Grace is evidence of one’s own partaking, like all others, having an attitude of humility.
- 2) Let you speech always be with salt.
  - a) Salt causes thirst, in this case for the things of God through the gospel.
  - b) Salt preserves and stops decay, so the gospel.
  - c) Salt seasons food, making it palatable and tasty and it also purifies and stops decay, so with the gospel.
    - \* We are the salt of the earth. Matt. 5:13
- 3) The reason being that we may know how we ought to answer each one. 1Pet. 3:15
  - a) Being full of God’s grace and His word, we can provide the particular

answer to the question a person has.  
3:16-17

- b)** We can dispel many of the misunderstandings about the Scriptures as well as the misrepresentations of Scripture.  
\* Verse two to six as we have said, is the command to Paul's opening prayer. 1:9-11

#### **4:7-15      The friends of Paul**

**4:7**      Tychicus is bearer of the letter. Col., Eph., Phile.; Eph. 6:21-22

- 1) Nine persons are named. vs. 7-15
- 2) Paul had never been to Colosse, yet he knew many people as his other letter reveal, like Romans.
- 3) He was a beloved brother.
  - a) One who was appreciated and valued, being family.
  - b) One who could be trusted and depended on.
- 4) He is a faithful minister. 1Cor. 4:2
  - a) He first appeared in Ephesus and was one of the seven to accompany Paul to Macedonia and tarry at Troas. Acts 20:4
  - b) He appears to of been in church leadership as he was sent to Ephesus

and summoned to Nicopolis. 2Tim. 4:12; Tit. 3:12

- 5)** He is a fellow servant.
- a) The word is "doulos", one who serves by choice.
  - b) The sphere of service is "in the Lord".
  - c) He would go and tell them of Paul's affairs.
  - d) He was a reliable minister, a waiter on tables.

**4:8**      The primary purpose of Tychicus being sent.

- 1) To know the Colossians affairs, without doubt regarding the false teachers.
- 2) To comfort "parakaleo" their hearts, by coming along side as an agent of the Holy Spirit to encourage and help.

**4:9**      Onesimus.

- 1) He said to be faithful, one reliable and trustworthy.
- 2) He is called a beloved brother, one who is loved and loves others.
- 3) He is said to be one of them, a Colossian.
  - a) He was a run away slave of Philemon, who had been converted by Paul at Rome.
  - b) He was traveling with Tychichus to return to his Master Philemon, along

with a letter interceding for Onesimus.  
3:22-4:1

- 4) Both he and Tychicus would inform the Colossians about the events at Rome.
- a) He had been unprofitable in the past.
  - b) He would now live up to his name “profitable”.

**4:10** Aristarchis and Mark.

- 1) Aristarchus.
  - a) He was apprehended by the riotous mob at Ephesus. Acts 19:20
  - b) He was a Thessalonian who sailed ahead with the others to meet Paul at Troas to accompany the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. Acts 20:4
  - c) He was with Paul when he sailed to Rome. Acts 27:2
  - d) He was now a fellow prisoner with Paul at Rome.
- 2) Mark.
  - a) He was a cousin to Barnabas.
  - b) Apparently they had received instructions regarding Mark and Paul affirms the approval of him by telling them, “If he come to you, welcome him”.
  - c) The church met in his mother’s house at Jerusalem. Acts 12:12-13, 25

- d) John-Mark had departed in the midst of the first missionary journey. Acts 12:25, 13:13
- e) At the second journey there occurred a strong disagreement between Paul and Barnabas about taking Mark a second time, so Barnabas took Mark, going to Cyprus and Paul took Silas, to see how the brethren were doing. Acts 15:36-40
- f) He was now with Paul in Rome.
- g) He was a companion of Peter and it is commonly expected that he wrote his gospel from Peter’s communication. 1Pet. 5:13
- h) Paul in his last will and testament declares John’s personal profit to him in ministry. 2Tim. 4:11

**4:11** Jesus.

- 1) He was named Jesus “Jehovah is salvation”, the Hebrew name “Joshua”.
- 2) He was called Justus, depicting his character being just and equitable, a Greek or Roman name.
- 3) One of the three Jews, by birth or proselytizing, who were fellow workers in the Kingdom of God with Paul.
  - a) The Kingdom of God, is the reign of God in the hearts of men and women

by the Holy Spirit, the people of God.  
1Cor. 6:9; Gal. 5:21

- b) The kingdom of God is present and yet to come in it's full sense.
- c) The church is part of the Kingdom but not the Kingdom, not will the church bring in the Kingdom, Christ will.
- d) He calls them of the circumcision!
- 3) They had been a great comfort to Paul.
  - a) They had been a comfort, using a medical term "paregoria", the word paregoric comes from it, a drug used to relieve pain.
  - b) This is the only time it appears in the New Testament.

#### **4:12** Epaphras.

- 1) He was a Colossian and the Pastor of Colosse, most likely the founder who came to Paul at Rome. Col. 1:7-8
  - a) His name is a shortened form Epaphroditus.
  - b) But not to be confused with Epaphroditus of Philipinans.
- 1) He is a bondservant "doulos" meaning a bond slave by choice, sent his greetings.
  - a) He most likely came to Ephesus and was converted through Paul's ministry.

- b) He had come to Rome to inform Paul of the false teaching at Colosse and receive advice as the Pastor.
- c) He is called a fellow prisoner by Paul. Phile.23
- 2) He is always laboring fervent in prayer for the Colossians.
  - a) The phrase laboring fervent "agonizomai" has to do with contending in gymnasium games.
  - b) We get out word agonizing, Epaphras agonized in prayer for the Colossians, always.
- 3) That they may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.
  - a) To stand perfect "teleios" means to lack nothing, a mature state.
  - b) To stand complete "pleroo" means to be filled up.
    - \* For their maturity spiritually, filled up with "all" of God's will!

#### **4:13** Paul's commendation of Epaphras.

- 1) Epaphras had a shepherds heart, being concerned about the Colossians.
- 2) Epaphras had also a missionaries heart, being concerned about those in Laodicea and Hierapolis.
  - \* The tri-cities of the Lycus Valley.

#### **4:14** Luke and Demas.

- 1) Luke.
  - a) He is called by Paul the beloved physician, a term of endearment and affection.  
\* He was a Gentile.
  - b) He traveled with Paul in his missionary journeys, joining him at Troas. Acts 16:10
  - c) He is called a fellow laborer. Phile. 24
  - d) He went with Paul to Rome. Acts 27:3
  - e) He is the only one with Paul at the end of his life. 2Tim. 4:11
  - f) He is the author of the gospel of Luke and Acts, which comprises, one third of the New Testament.
- 2) Demas.
  - a) Nothing is said about him but that he greeted the Colossians.
  - b) He is called a fellow worker. Phile. 24
  - c) He is said to have deserted and forsaken Paul loving the world, departing to Thessalonica. 2Tim. 4:10
  - d) He has been called the fly in the ointment.

**4:15** The greetings to those in Laodicea.

- 1) The brethren identify those born again, yet when John wrote to the church, around 90 A. D., he called them “lukewarm”. Rev. 3:15

- 2) Nymphas is an individual who had opened his house and the church gathered at Laodicea.
  - a) The New Testament church was made up of house churches. Acts 12:12; 16:40; Rom. 16:5; 1Cor. 16:19; Philem. 2
  - b) There is a possibility that it refers to a woman’s name rather than a man.

#### **4:16-18** Closing exhortations

**4:16** The instructions regarding the epistles.

- 1) That they have their epistle read at Laodicea.
- 2) That the epistle to Laodicea be read at Colosse.
  - a) Some believe Ephesians is the Laodicean letter mentioned here, at times called a circular letter.
  - b) I think that the most likely possibility is that this Laodicean letter is lost and we do not possess it, as one of the Corinthians letters. 1Cor. 5:9

**4:17** The instructions to Archippus.

- 1) To take heed to the ministry “deaconea” he had received of the Lord.  
\* We get our word deacon from it!

- a) Whether he was the Pastor of Laodicea or one left in the ministry of Colosse in the absence of Epaphras, is uncertain.
  - b) The son of Philemon is also Archipus and the church did meet in his house, this most likely is the most profitable conclusion, called a fellow soldier.
  - b) This is a warning in view of high privilege.
  - c) This is accountability in view of enablement for ministry.
  - d) This is responsibility in view of the ministry received of the Lord.
- 2) To fulfill it.
- a) In view of quality, dedication.
  - b) In view of time, duration.
  - c) In view of faithfulness and loyalty.

**4:18** The closing salutation.

- 1) Paul signed the letter at this point, not the amanuensis, for authentication. 1Cor. 16:21; 2Thess. 3:17
  - a) Some believe Paul had the eye disease called ophthalmia that he contracted through malaria. Acts
  - b) In Galatians he mentions that they would of given their very eyes to him and the fact that he wrote with a large letter. Gal. 4:15; 6:11
- 2) Paul requests they remember his chain.

- 3) Paul desires grace to be with the believers at Colosse. Col. 1:2